

Advisory Council December 14, 2001
Chair's Report

I believe I can speak for all our members when I report that this has been a gratifying year and a half. We've accomplished a good deal and can look forward to the year ahead with a clear view of what remains to be done.

By way of a brief review, let me highlight some of the good things which the combined skills, knowledge and efforts of our members and ADS staff have been able to accomplish this time around.

First, we improved our tools by amending the by-laws to conform the annual year to the calendar year and the funding cycles the ADS depends upon. We developed an orientation program for new members and orientation notebooks for all members. To help us in choosing among which service priorities to recommend, we passed a set of guidelines, and these our sponsors approved. Some members took part in computer training and some in developing an Internet web-site. As an ongoing compass, we agreed upon a mission statement.

Certain responsibilities are ours by mandate. These, I'm pleased to say, were discharged well. Specifically, we helped promote participation in public hearings to update the Area Four-Year Plan and the allocation of our discretionary funds. We made recommendations to ADS on service priorities and provided oversight on staff reports of how well funding targets are being met. From various perspectives brought by our 27-members, respectively representing the City, County and United Way, we brought to the attention of ADS needs and service gaps which are being experienced by the elderly and disabled adults.

Moving to the activity side, the year and a half saw us engage architects, builders, designers, advocacy agencies and City Councilmembers in promoting incentives to include Universal Design features in new subsidized-housing starts. Last fall's Legislative Forum and recent head-to-head discussions with our representatives paid dividends in credibility and influence.

With other advocacy groups, we lobbied for reauthorization of the Older Americans Act and its greater funding; passage and funding of the State's Family Caregiver Act; support services for family care-givers; and extending those support services to grandparents caring for grandchildren. At the present time, we are insisting on a do-able ratio of client to casemanager. With support from us, the Seattle Consolidated Plan was changed to lower eligibility for the City's Human Services Congregate Meals Program to age fifty.

A recent City Council discussion how services can be of greater help to adults with disabilities was promoted with assistance from ADS staff. Members met with representatives of the United Tribes of All Nations to discuss how ADS might be more responsive to unmet needs of our Urban Native Americans. We're promoting expansion of the Farmer's Market Fresh Produce Program and are looking at outcome measures of health gains.

We may note with pride that in the name of the Council, a member serves on the City's Housing Levy Oversight Committee; and a member testified at the Social Security Advisory Board at its Seattle hearing. On behalf of a cooperating organization, a Councilmember led the successful drive for passage of the State's Initiative to set up a Home Care Authority.

These achievements were made possible only because members were willing to commit themselves to serving on the Health Care and the Housing Task Forces, on the Advocacy and Outreach and the Planning and Allocations Committees. Nor could they have happened without the support of staff, who cheerfully extended themselves far beyond the regular demands of their assignments. Out thanks to you, Pam, Rosemary, Peggy, Karen, Linda, Margaret, Allison and Jane. And to you Georgiana and Lillian.

I hope you'll all agree that, given our "charge", the Advisory Council has "acquitted" itself, and that an even more interesting history will be written in the next year under its new leadership.

Respectfully submitted,

Murray Meld, Chair



Outgoing Chair, Murray Meld, passes the Advisory Council leadership to new Chair, Karen Sluiter.

Thanks Murray, for a job well done!

Congratulations Karen! We're looking forward to a new and fruitful year.